



**EVALUATION OF WEST BANK/GAZA PROGRAM
OF
SAVE THE CHILDREN FEDERATION**

**(Cooperative Agreement 2
Grant No. NEB-0183-A-00-4073-00)**

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PREFACE

This evaluation of the 7 1/2-year cooperative agreement between AID and Save the Children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip began with preparatory work in Washington, D.C., in late October 1992. From October 31 through November 24, the team then undertook field studies in the West Bank and Gaza, and prepared a draft report. Final report writing, presentations, and debriefings in Washington, D.C., were carried out in December 1992.

The evaluation team consisted of James M. Pines, Janet W. Lowenthal, and George M. Odeh. The team wishes to thank the staff of Save the Children, in both the West Bank and Gaza field offices, for their outstanding cooperation and assistance.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

AID	Agency for International Development
AMIDEAST	U.S. PVO also funded in part by AID
C-BIRD	Community Based Responsive Development (the SCF approach)
CDP	Cooperative Development Program
CIVAD	Israeli Civil Administration
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
dunam	1,000 sq. meters (about 1/4 of an acre)
ECRC	Early Childhood Resource Center
ECD	Early Childhood Development
MRC	Medical Relief Committee
NECC	Near East Council of Churches
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
O & M	Operations and Maintenance
OT	Occupied Territories
PHC	Primary Health Care
PPI	Program Performance Indicator
PRA	Participatory Rapid Appraisal
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SCF	Save the Children Federation Office for the West Bank and Gaza
SCF/G	Save the Children Gaza Program
SCF/WB	Save the Children West Bank Program
SDT	Subsurface Drainage Technique

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Save the Children Federation (SCF) received an AID grant known as Rural Community Development II (Project No. 398-0159.12, administered under Cooperative Agreement No. NEB-0183-A-00-4073), for \$11.7 million, from 1984 through December 31, 1991. The grant was modified through 10 amendments, including seven increases of funds and three no-cost extensions.

From October 31 through November 24, 1992, a team assembled by Chemonics International undertook a field evaluation in the West Bank and Gaza. The team included James M. Pines, Janet W. Lowenthal, and George M. Odeh. This evaluation followed an evaluation carried out in 1989 (Heegard, et al) that concluded: "Save the Children has once again demonstrated its excellence, particularly in small and micro projects." An expert from Atlantic Resources Corporation, on another AID assignment at the time of the present evaluation, stated that "Save the Children has a sensible, cost-effective and well-developed management information system...." 1992
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1989

SCF performed effectively in accomplishing the planned objectives of the grant, which included outcomes useful for strengthening the capacity of local groups to coordinate development activities within their own communities. Activities under the grant included ^b agriculture, water and sewage systems, health, education, and training. The grant also emphasized women's activities and enhancing women's role in decision-making and implementation.

During the 7 1/2-year life of the project, the grantee implemented, funded, or provided training for 142 of the 180 originally planned activities. Failure to complete all planned activities stemmed primarily from difficulties in obtaining project clearances from Israeli authorities, and other difficulties associated with the political context in the Occupied Territories.

SCF maintains separate offices in the West Bank and Gaza, with competent program managers operating under the general supervision of SCF's West Bank/Gaza Director. Political, cultural, and economic differences between the West Bank and Gaza led to relatively autonomous activities in each area, though the SCF community development approach prevailed in both. During the grant period, funding for Gaza activities increased from approximately 25 percent to more than 50 percent of total budget.

Although staff turnover has been considerable, partly for political reasons, SCF generally maintained sufficient staff during the grant period to manage and administer the program effectively.

Until 1989, SCF activities consisted primarily of infrastructure construction in cooperation with village councils and municipalities, as well as donations of equipment for Δ in SCF
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preschools, clinics, and other institutions. In all cases, beneficiary groups and institutions contributed at least half the total cost. SCF had little programmatic or monitoring responsibility for these activities once construction was finished or equipment installed.

During 1989, SCF shifted its program focus dramatically by emphasizing longer-term relationships in selected "impact areas," and by implementing small-scale projects with informal community groups and village committees. The change was prompted by difficulties in controlling large-scale infrastructure projects and in working with Israeli-linked village councils. In addition, the intifada increased the development readiness of many Palestinian villages and led to the creation of many new nonprofit organizations through which SCF could work.

Completion During the project, SCF assisted in the construction of at least 29 agricultural roads and built over 50 sanitation systems that, in many cases, included provision of water. SCF also supported development and experimental implementation of appropriate technology, through Palestinian research institutions, in solar electricity, subsurface drainage techniques, and integrated pest management. In addition, crop diversification efforts have contributed to the introduction of fruits not previously grown in the territories.

Engineering and technical aspects of infrastructure projects appear to have been adequate, and few maintenance problems were noted during field visits. In addition, recent SCF efforts to use appropriate technologies, which put operations and maintenance well within community capacity, reduce the likelihood of future maintenance difficulties. Furthermore, village committees (unlike village councils) assume "ownership" of completed projects, minimizing the likelihood of neglect, because SCF now encourages community labor and contributions before supplying its own resources.

In health, education, and women's activities, SCF provided over 60 preschools with playground equipment and educational materials; assisted 18 health institutions, of which 15 are still operating; and coordinated or provided training for community health workers, preschool teachers, and supervisors. The program also supported training of 19 physiotherapists, who are now completing a four-year program, and helped to establish six women's training centers. Participatory research and evaluation exercises, funded as program development, have yielded especially impressive and sustainable results through training provided to decision makers in local private voluntary organizations (PVOs).

Current SCF activities reflect lessons learned during early grant implementation. The emphasis on impact areas, in which considerable community organization work precedes execution of individual projects, reflects SCF recognition that infrastructure construction and equipment donation, though useful, too often have little sustainable impact on beneficiaries and institutions. In addition, SCF now works primarily as a catalyst and facilitator for local institutions, rather than as an implementing agency. Indeed, SCF now plays an important role as coordinator of Palestinian institutions, with differing political orientations, that would otherwise be unlikely to work together.



In agriculture and infrastructure, SCF now seeks to integrate what were formerly separate projects, by combining such activities as sewer and water, water conservation, and seedling distribution, as well as other linked activities. SCF currently achieves synergistic effects that were not possible with its previous project-by-project approach.

Because SCF already provides excellent and timely information about inputs and outputs, and because current activities address ambitious purpose and goal outcomes, there is a need for data collection, through regular staff field visits, to assess progress during and after implementation. SCF's impressive internal project evaluations, in which staff are assisted by outside specialists, provide important conclusions about program implementation, progress, and problems, but should be supplemented by information collection that facilitates mid-course corrections.

AID now provides about 25 percent of SCF's West Bank/Gaza budget, down from more than 90 percent at the beginning of the grant. AID management has been more than adequate during the life of the grant, assisting SCF in becoming a more mature and effective PVO. With SCF's increasingly diverse funding base, both SCF and AID can now benefit from development of a more mature and collaborative relationship.

This relationship can be improved by concentrating AID funding on a few specific activities or areas to reduce monitoring and reporting requirements. AID acceptance of SCF internal reports to meet AID requirements would also be useful, and can be achieved through a little good faith negotiation. More flexible AID funding under the program development line, for example, would help SCF achieve many important institutional outcomes that do not lend themselves to more rigid project categorization.

In addition, AID should benefit from SCF's impressive evolution as a development institution, by reviewing possibilities for using SCF to help channel funds to Palestinian institutions.

AID and SCF need to review all projects executed under the 7 1/2-year grant, closing the books on those where no further SCF action is required. SCF should then, with or without AID support, develop explicit goals and activities for maximizing benefits from already completed work.

SECTION I INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Save the Children Federation (SCF) has worked in the West Bank and Gaza since 1978, with funding from AID and other sources. SCF has received a total of \$22.5 million from AID, in five separate grants that sometimes ran concurrently:

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>\$</u>
Operation Program Grant	77-81	2.3 m
Rural/Community Development I	81-86	6.4
Rural/Community Development II (AID III)	84-91	11.7
Revolving Loan Fund Project	86-87	.448
Community Development II	92-94	1.5

This evaluation is concerned with the third of these, Rural/Community Development II, also known as AID III. It does not include the Revolving Loan Fund program, which was funded entirely under a separate grant.

During its 7 1/2-year history, the AID III grant was modified through 10 amendments, which included seven increases of funds and three no-cost extensions (see Table D). The initial grant covered 66 activities; by grant completion, funding had been provided for 188 activities, of which 142 were implemented. The total AID investment was \$11,693,920, of which approximately \$8.5 million went directly into the 142 projects. Contributions from private funds, other donors, and participating communities more than doubled the total financial input for these activities.

Under AID III, projects were implemented in many sectors, including agriculture, infrastructure, water and sewage systems, appropriate technology, training and related activities for women, health, education, and economic development. Activities in the West Bank and Gaza are similar, but adapted to differences between the two areas.

Since SCF first began working in the Occupied Territories, its program has evolved in several important ways. First, the relative size of the Gaza program has gradually increased. In 1986, it was about one-fourth the size of that in the West Bank. By 1988 the two were about the same size, and by 1992 the Gaza program was slightly larger. This shift reflects the greater needs in Gaza, and the relative ease of attracting donor funding in this region. At the time of this evaluation, SCF was probably the largest AID-funded PVO in Gaza.

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until 1986 SCF concentrated on med/large scale infrastructure
now small scale community-based projects

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Second, the program has undergone a major programmatic shift. Until 1986, SCF concentrated on the construction of medium- and large-scale infrastructure projects, such as water and sewage networks, agricultural roads, and electricity grids, in conjunction with municipalities and village councils. A secondary focus was "equipment drops," the purchase of equipment for clinics and preschools run by charitable societies.

The "new" approach had been phased in by the end of grant period, when SCF's portfolio consisted mainly of small-scale, community-based projects implemented with community groups. This shift occurred in response to the proliferation of new Palestinian NGOs during the 1980s, and the increasing difficulties since the intifada (beginning in late 1987) of working with Israeli-controlled institutions. SCF has simultaneously moved toward a geographical and programmatic integration of activities by designating three clusters of villages in the West Bank as "impact areas." The SCF program in Gaza has, since 1989, emphasized integration of activities and longer involvements with fewer groups and institutions.

The "old" approach is embodied in the 34 "USAID Project Summaries-Completed Project" outlines prepared for AID (all dated June 1992). The activities implemented under the old approach vary in amount (from under \$1,000 to over \$500,000), duration, form and extent of SCF participation, and relation to one other. Although most activities had titles that permitted classification as a) agriculture, b) health and education, or c) infrastructure and resource conservation, many had clearly involved only the provision of equipment, or collaboration on a single construction activity. The project summaries and other SCF reports provide a comprehensive description of activities and outputs delivered under the grant.

The earlier approach contrasts sharply with that reflected in SCF's 1991 proposal for a new Integrated Community Development Program, in which integration of activities and development of long-term relationships with beneficiary groups and institutions is more apparent. SCF is implementing this "new" approach through its Community-Based Integrated Responsive Development (C-BIRD) methodology, in such areas as small-scale infrastructure, food production and agriculture, economic development, resource conservation, health, education, and human resource development. Today, SCF sees its role as catalyst and innovator, rather than implementor, with a primary focus on strengthening the capabilities of local institutions and networks.

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Third, SCF has diversified its funding base dramatically. Whereas about 95 percent of its West Bank/Gaza budget came from AID in 1986, by 1992 AID provided only about 23 percent of SCF funding. SCF made this shift primarily to broaden its funding base and reduce dependence on a single donor.

B. The Assignment

AID commissioned an evaluation of Cooperative Agreement No. NEB-0183-A-00-4073, Project No. 398-0159.12. The evaluation team was asked to: assess the grantee's success in accomplishing its planned objectives, assess project results and impact, and

document lessons learned that can be applied in the implementation of SCF's new integrated community development program.

Because SCF's earlier activities under this cooperative agreement were evaluated in 1989, the evaluation team was asked to focus particular attention on project activities carried out since 1989.

A team of two U.S. specialists and an experienced Palestinian engineer, working under the auspices of Chemonics International, conducted field work in the West Bank and Gaza and prepared a draft evaluation report from October 30 to November 24, 1992. The final report was completed in Washington, D.C., during December 1992.

C. Method

The evaluation method emphasizes the identification of patterns and generalizations that would provide useful lessons or suggest future program modifications. This approach was chosen because the team wished to avoid second-guessing with the benefit of hindsight, or rehashing information contained in the many other materials already available.

Such materials include the 1989 evaluation (Heegard et al, 1989) that concluded: "Save the Children has once again demonstrated its excellence, particularly in small and micro projects." (p.4) The current Evaluation team also had the benefit of an interim report by an expert from Atlantic Resources Corporation, on another AID assignment, stating that:

"Save the Children has a sensible, cost effective and well-developed MIS that reflects a thorough understanding of its use as a reporting, management, and evaluative tool by the entire staff" (Ken Lizzio, 1992, draft report).

In addition, Save the Children presented the evaluators with an impressive collection of evaluation reports, prepared by SCF staff with outside technical specialists. In view of the fact that SCF performance has been appraised so favorably, readers of this Evaluation can assume that aspects of SCF's program that are not discussed explicitly here were found to be satisfactory.

Because the 1989 evaluation left some open questions (e.g., about uncompleted projects), and since both the SCF approach and the West Bank and Gaza context have changed significantly since 1989, the present evaluation necessarily involved review of both old and new activities. However, the range and magnitude of work to be reviewed, together with the more than seven years of grant duration, encouraged a broad and extensive approach rather than application of a microscope to individual projects. Consequently, the idea of including an agricultural specialist on the team, contemplated initially, was dropped. The technical knowledge of SCF staff and consultants more than satisfied the team's need for sophisticated technical help.

Selection of specific sites and activities for review evolved from a) the need to review certain projects mentioned in the 1989 report, b) achievement of an appropriate balance

between the West Bank and Gaza, c) desire to view the many different kinds and approaches of activities, and d) logistic considerations. The schedule, developed with SCF's excellent cooperation, also permitted review of all SCF work in specific geographical areas, reducing the risk of confinement to favored activities.

The questions posed by the Scope of Work (see Annex A) required careful attention to differences between the West Bank and Gaza. Many answers differ for each area, because the two program contexts are not the same, and because decentralized SCF management encourages differences in program approach under the same AID umbrella.

Review of the new SCF Cooperative Agreement Proposal suggested that the evaluation method should pay special attention to the relation between "physical" and "institutional" or "sustainability" goals. It was clear that both SCF and AID were still grappling with the implications of the shift from infrastructure construction to the strengthening of local institutions, including community groups.

The evaluation method also included intensive review of the SCF-AID relationship. It became clear very soon that, with AID now providing less than 25 percent of the SCF budget, and with SCF evolving into a key independent participant in the broader SCF development process, the original relationship between the two agencies has become obsolete. Because an appropriate and productive relationship is the key to bettering performance on all fronts of primary interest to AID, it seemed sensible to explore possibilities for improvement.

The evaluation team emphasized a collaborative rather than formal style. Instead of adhering to a structured format, the evaluation method involved general discussion followed by guided conversation about particular issues that emerged. The experienced and well-qualified SCF staff responded well to the approach. The method was responsive to the Scope of Work, while providing professional satisfaction to all concerned.

D. The Current Context

Although the Scope of Work cautions against excessive discussion of the SCF program context, a few recent developments bear mention. It is clear, for example, that the tremendous amount of donor funding now available in the Occupied Territories, and likely to grow as the transition proceeds, has implications that have not been considered sufficiently. SCF has responded promptly and effectively to this development, by reducing its own reliance on AID support and by helping local agencies with grant applications to secure donor funding. The new context may expand programming options in other ways as well.

Although the fates of the West Bank and Gaza are linked inextricably, there are dramatic differences between the two areas, with important implications for the program. While AID and SCF clearly recognize these differences, calling attention to them may reduce the likelihood of over-generalization by less informed readers. The difference in politics, cultures, geography, and many other aspects justify treatment of the West Bank and Gaza as

two "countries," at least for program purposes. The presence of separate SCF program managers and AID/State monitors reinforces this conclusion.

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While the intifada need not be described here, some recently recognized consequences have had a major influence on SCF programming. For example, as many men have lost jobs or been imprisoned since the intifada, women in the territories have become more independent and economically active, creating a new target of opportunity for gender-related programming.

Working with village and municipal councils, always controversial because of their ties with Israeli authorities, has become even less appropriate since the intifada. Furthermore, the emergence of many new Palestinian non-governmental institutions (NGOs), and the increased assertiveness of Palestinians with respect to their own development and political future, has forced dramatic changes in SCF goals and strategies.

The political context also influenced the SCF approach to economic programming. By putting a high premium on local economic self-sufficiency and resistance to Israeli imports, the intifada created new local markets. Although the ultimate economic context remains unclear, skills acquired now will be useful in any context. Modest optimism about transition, coupled with increased recognition that Palestinians must eventually assume control over a range of institutions and activities, has influenced strongly both life in the territories and SCF's role in seeking to improve it.

Despite the advent of a new administration in Israel, the occupation remains the principal obstacle to SCF's work in the West Bank and Gaza. Continued differences between SCF and AID about the need to receive clearance from Israeli authorities for SCF activities, a requirement imposed by the U.S. Department of State, impede SCF effectiveness and damage the SCF/AID relationship. The persistent but futile arguments about changing the clearance policy, which is beyond control of either AID or SCF, should give way to collaborative and creative efforts to minimize its impact (e.g., by concentrating AID funding in certain areas, cooperating to secure blanket approvals, and exploring alternatives).

SECTION II

ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT INPUTS, OUTPUTS, AND PURPOSES

The more than 140 activities implemented during the life of this grant reflect both "old" and "new" approaches to SCF's West Bank/Gaza program. The team visited a sampling of both types of activities but focused on the latter, because earlier projects were covered by previous evaluations, and some institutional memory loss has occurred.

It would serve little purpose to enumerate here all the activities completed under this project grant. The 1989 evaluation presented activities to date, and Annex E of the present report lists others. In addition, SCF semi-annual and final reports present quantified descriptions of activities and outputs. Examination of pre-project data collection, and the detailed and appropriate SCF Project Selection Criteria, revealed that most projects represented sensible and effective responses to well-identified problems and needs.

It is also clear, after field review of selected projects that differed in content, initiation date, duration, and degree of integration, that SCF performed well in delivering inputs and the related project outputs. Extensive reports produced by SCF verify generally that SCF did what it promised. These materials document such project outputs as numbers of beneficiaries, seedlings distributed, preschools assisted, and dunams fenced. Field staff will necessarily continue to monitor implementation, but the need of SCF headquarters and AID for routine reports on project inputs and outputs might reasonably diminish.

Instead, given SCF's demonstrated capacity to meet output targets, both AID and SCF should be more concerned with describing and reporting on specific prospective outcomes beyond the output level. This more sophisticated approach to reporting should be facilitated by SCF's programmatic shift—from infrastructure construction to more intensive work with local community groups—which itself constitutes a major step toward linking outputs with the broader purpose and objectives of the Community Development Project.

Because the purpose and objectives described in the logframe are so general, the Scope of Work question "Did the outputs lead to the purpose?" must be answered in equally general terms. Most current SCF activities are consistent with, and contribute to, the kind of development process envisioned in the statement of Purpose and Objectives. These activities address communal, institutional, and behavioral aspects of the process, simultaneously producing immediate improvements in the material conditions of individual beneficiaries.

The absence of systematic reporting on purpose-level accomplishments, limiting this report to anecdotal accounts, stems partly from the failure to accompany the very general purpose statements with more specific, easily measured, performance indicators. In addition, the early focus on completed construction and donated equipment diverted attention from the accomplishment of longer-term purposes.

The old SCF approach involved modest short-term contact with beneficiaries and institutions. The current program, emphasizing more intense, longer-term work with selected impact areas and institutions, enhances possibilities for achieving purpose-level impacts, which include improved individual and institutional skills and capacities. Future SCF reporting can be expected to reflect the present, more explicit, attention to program purpose.

This section of the report highlights outcomes, both physical and institutional, that are stages in the emerging development process. Although the physical outputs have independent significance, their primary contribution often relates to the strengthening of individual and institutional capacities. Although other purpose level indicators, such as independent community initiatives, are essential, community collaboration in completing physical outputs, for example, is a useful intermediate indicator.

Because the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza continues to be the major obstacle to SCF effectiveness, and the principal reason for deviation from planned program activities, the following discussion includes little reference to other implementation problems. Technical and managerial aspects of SCF performance, including the development of management systems, improved significantly during the grant period. The impressive constancy and rigor of SCF self-appraisal explain much of this progress, along with SCF staff quality and technical support from SCF headquarters in Westport, Connecticut. Save the Children is not perfect, but few deficiencies remain uncorrected long enough for detection by outside evaluators.

A. Agriculture

The SCF approach to agriculture emphasizes the exploratory introduction of innovations, with at least partial funding, and subsequent dissemination of those that appear promising. This approach is especially important in view of the fact that no publicly-supported agricultural research stations exist in the territories. The program's six components included 1) innovation, experimentation, and demonstration; 2) land reclamation, crop diversification, and fencing; 3) agricultural water resource development; 4) loans for productive agriculture and agribusiness; 5) small grants for household animals and gardens; and 6) extension and information dissemination.

Working with local institutions, including universities, the program has produced many outcomes that provide Palestinian farmers with environmentally sound and economically productive alternatives to current practices. Although distribution of small animals to families proved to be a difficult and high-cost intervention in the territories, SCF learned from the experience. Animal distribution continues, but only as part of integrated agricultural activities in impact areas.

Even projects characterized by some SCF staff as "failures" contribute to agricultural development. For example, a final report on "Date Seedling Distribution in the Gaza Strip" (August 1990) describes the failure of a hypothesis that date production could be a major

source of income. Nevertheless, this experimental activity provided useful technical information about date production and guidance for future SCF agricultural activities.

Crop Diversification in Gaza, also characterized by some as "unsuccessful" because results fell below expectations, not only provided useful information but also enabled 3,000 farmers to test alternatives in a declining citrus market. Farmers interviewed during field visits, though clearly the "survivors," continue to diversify profitably.

Such indicators as the "number of dunams fenced" or "number of animals distributed," though useful intermediate measures, fail to reflect the more permanent outcomes that SCF seeks. The "activity-by-activity" funding practice diverts attention from a continuing process of building self-sustaining new bases for action, including farmer capacity, Palestinian institutional capability, and, where necessary, a supportive policy environment. SCF could benefit from more explicit delineation of intermediate institutional goals, in training and coalition-building for example. This would sharpen program focus and encourage identification of more specific purpose-level indicators.

As work under the grant progressed, SCF came to recognize the limitations of programming such activities as fencing, small animal husbandry, or agricultural roads as isolated interventions. Many Palestinians see fencing as a way of protecting their land from confiscation by Israeli authorities, so SCF's programming of this item can be justified as a prerequisite for any further agricultural work. Other agricultural activities have been integrated, however, so that they become elements of a strategy for achieving profitable and sustainable farming in a clearly delimited area.

Visits to the ambitious, but promising, Bani Na'im ("Eastern Slopes") and Qabalan agricultural sites confirmed the increased sophistication of SCF's goals and related planning. These undertakings involve the integration of fencing, water conservation (e.g., the construction of cisterns), crop diversification, technical assistance, and other activities into a comprehensive effort to develop self-sustaining agricultural enterprises.

Conversation and observation suggested, however, that SCF has not yet fully recognized the implications of its integrative strategy planning for its continued relationships to projects. Although Hebron University will carry out the bulk of future research and extension work needed to bring the Eastern Slopes project to fruition, many steps are required to move from the fencing, water, and seedling activities now underway to the profitable marketing of new fruit crops that is the project's ultimate goal.

The farmers may succeed despite the occasional visits that SCF now contemplates. A more systematic assessment, however, of expected results and ways in which SCF could serve as catalyst and provide moral support, would add to the likelihood of success. The project involves 700 dunams of land, 120 new or refurbished cisterns, and seven kilometers of access road, so is worth significant and continued attention. In addition, the political context, including the close proximity of a settlement, warrants SCF's continued presence as protection against conditions beyond the farmers' control.

The Qabalan project requires a similar ongoing relationship. In this case, SCF contributed 50 percent of the cost of 12,000 Golani apple seedlings. This crop is new to the area, requires four years of cultivation, and is subject to various environmental problems and risks. The conditions and prices in expected markets are also unpredictable, and the farmers will need all available help. SCF needs to maintain a close relationship with them to enhance the likelihood that their investment will lead to a self-sustaining, profitable operation.

These examples demonstrate that SCF has moved to a new and more consequential plateau in agricultural programming. Recognizing that it cannot and should not operate alone at this level, SCF has effectively mobilized local technical and institutional resources. It has not yet recognized fully, however, that institutional linkages alone do not assure the achievement of ambitious goals, since the institutions may not perform as well as expected.

Operating in a more integrated way, SCF can no longer think primarily in terms of short-term, completed projects. The new approach calls for tapering off relationships slowly, but devoting longer-term attention to institutional goals, such as transportation and marketing, as such needs arise.

Careful identification of the limits beyond which SCF chooses not to go will allow it eventually to dissociate from particular areas and activities. It is clear, however, that buying some seedlings or assisting with a few cisterns is far less than this experienced program can and should be doing.

Integration of activities in agriculture is part of SCF's "integrated community development" approach. It can be followed, however, even where the more extensive C-BIRD method, involving activities in many sectors, is not applied. Though integrated community development is likely to include related water conservation and agricultural activities, among other sectors, integration of agricultural work is also essential where agricultural development concerns are addressed separately. SCF now engages in few agricultural activities that are not integrated with others as part of broader strategies.

While integrated community development often refers to a process that involves "the community" or a representative committee, responses to various needs are often implemented by smaller groups with shared interests. Agriculture and preschool education, for example, may be part of the same community plan, but the implementing groups may have little contact. In both cases, however, integrated activities and continued SCF involvement are essential for sustainable impact. The same considerations affect SCF resource conservation and infrastructure work, where the grant also produced increased integration of responses.

B. Resource Conservation and Infrastructure

During the grant period, SCF developed a strong capacity to assist in the construction of critical infrastructure facilities. The major current priorities in this sector are: combined sewer and water systems; water conservation networks; and intensive efforts to introduce and implement a new Sub-surface Drainage Technique (SDT), an alternative to septic tanks. Road construction has diminished dramatically.

Although SCF no longer assists large infrastructure construction, the completed works remain serviceable and have been maintained well. The team visited major water projects in Ramallah and Bethlehem, and the Rafah sewer lagoon project in Gaza, for example, and found them to be operating well. The counterpart agencies, well-established public authorities and municipalities, have absorbed SCF help without difficulty, though the implementation periods involved many problems with Israeli authorities, contractors, and others.

After considerable difficulty with larger projects, for political and occasionally technical reasons, SCF began redirecting its assistance to smaller construction projects that made control by beneficiaries and SCF more feasible. In addition, emphasis shifted to identification, development, and use of appropriate technologies that brought operation and maintenance (O & M) of completed works more within community capacity. A result was a corresponding reduction in the need for careful attention to the financial and implementation aspects of O&M. This new approach also encouraged longer and more intensive efforts at individual sites, to increase likelihood of achieving purpose-level capacity and sustainability objectives.

Roads Although few agricultural roads are now being assisted, most of those built during the early years of the grant have remained serviceable. Indeed, since SCF deliberately left many roads unsurfaced to avoid CIVAD clearance problems, some participating village councils have since paved them on their own. The team viewed two well-implemented examples.

Roads were occasionally undermaintained, though still in use. In Gaza, for example, drifting sand had caused problems, and in the West Bank, part of one road had been neglected because farmers use that section less than others. The team's engineer found the choice of road locations to be generally good, however, and clearly serving the intended agricultural purposes. Despite occasional problems, maintenance exceeded the standards prevailing in the West Bank and Gaza.

Sewage A key project objective was to develop and implement appropriate solutions to chronic sewage problems in the territories. Accordingly, SCF worked with the engineering department of Bir Zeit University to adapt SDT, a low-cost, low-maintenance system that has been used successfully throughout the world. The new technique allows households to dispose of wastes more effectively and with less water. By the grant's end SCF had installed about 350 SDT units, with participating households contributing 50 percent of the building cost, and SCF providing the materials (amounting to about \$450 per household unit).

SCF conducted a follow-up evaluation on the introduction of the SDT system that identified problems and contributed to its redesign. The SCF evaluation revealed, for example, that despite SDT's positive reception by participating communities, the technique had not been widely replicated by others. While some of the problems might have been identified earlier had field staff routinely tabulated well known data, implementation of the SDT programming cycle remains a significant accomplishment.

Field visits however, disclosed unforeseen maintenance problems and early filling of tanks that require continued attention. Because SDT is new in the West Bank and Gaza, and SCF-assisted installations incorporate new technology, systematic follow-up is critical. Failure to detect and address problems quickly diminishes the likelihood that others will adopt the innovation. Field observations suggested that SDT work would benefit from a more systematic effort to assure continued proper use, and dissemination, of the promising new technology. SCF involvement with pilot communities and individuals can be reduced gradually, but should not end abruptly.

C. Sewer and Water Projects

The ongoing Gaza City Neighborhood Sewage Line Extension Project, which started in 1985 and has cost \$589,916 (including \$294,958 from AID), illustrates the advantages of integration and extended relationships. The project connects urban neighborhoods to the main city sewer line. With 30 completed "subprojects," SCF has made a major contribution to municipal sanitation and health, responded to a universally felt need in a neglected urban area, and laid the foundation for continued community development work.

Good initial community organization, close supervision of construction, and regular return to sites assure quality output and early detection of later problems. Although the project involves some continued contact with the Gaza Municipality, which operates the main line to which the neighborhood extensions connect, SCF involvement with government offices is modest, and approval of new sites (handled by neighborhood committees) rarely presents major problems now.

SCF knows which households are connected to the sewer line, though this information does not seem to be tabulated or reported anywhere. Field staff use the information to identify new beneficiaries and to guide future implementation. They do not, nor should they, monitor the incidence of disease in project areas. The elimination of contaminated water in the streets, an immediate consequence of project activity, is an adequate initial indicator. Judging by its current approach to evaluation, SCF is likely to incorporate data on disease, collected by others, in a future evaluation.

The foregoing discussion emphasizes the importance of weighing the needs of SCF headquarters and AID for information, which are often excessive in relation to assistance provided, against the administrative burden on field offices. The Gaza Neighborhood Sewer Extension Project shows SCF at its best. It may not be necessary to provide others with information beyond the number of households receiving sewer service, although field staff may make good use of additional data.

It is not clear whether SCF/Gaza intends for neighborhood groups involved in sewer projects to become vehicles for continued self-reliant development activities. According to impressionistic reports from a former SCF staff member, many neighborhoods have followed up with better disposal of solid waste (i.e., more garbage cans), and additional requests for SCF assistance. In the city of Tuffah, for example, an SCF sewer project was followed by

the creation of a community preschool and, soon after, the establishment of a Women's Center, both with the continuing help of SCF/Gaza.

It would be useful to sample a broader selection of neighborhood groups to see how many have initiated other work. The findings might identify additional impact from the single intervention or, if SCF intended to achieve sustained development efforts, would indicate gaps that need attention.

Because much of the construction work in infrastructure projects was done by private contractors, SCF's emphasis with respect to institutional infrastructure development (in addition to community work with local groups) has been primarily to improve the capacity of local research centers. As the following sections illustrate, work in health, education, and womens' projects requires more effort to improve the operating capacity of participating institutions.

D. Health

During AID III's early years, SCF provided equipment for clinics and laboratories, including support for "one-of-a-kind" health facilities such as Gaza's only eye clinic, ear, nose, and throat (ENT) clinic, blood bank, and pediatric referral service. Assistance was in the form of one-time grants, for no more than 50 percent of total costs, with the explicit understanding that SCF would not pay operating or recurrent costs. Little, if any, programmatic involvement or monitoring on SCF's part was ever intended. With the emergence of an increasingly active Palestinian health sector, in 1989 SCF reduced and refocused its program toward complementary needs, such as training and water systems.

The team visited several recipients of equipment (e.g., clinics run by a Patients' Friends Society and the Near East Council of Churches in Gaza, and a dental clinic run by the Islamic Charitable Society in Bani Na'im, West Bank). Major items (e.g., an ENT unit) were well-maintained, in constant use, and part of each institution's overall service delivery.

These activities do not constitute development programming and, in hindsight, it is easy to criticize mere equipment drops. SCF played a useful role however, as a conduit for AID funding, within a highly constrained political environment. The projects were worthwhile and served the more limited purpose of strengthening the health infrastructure of selected medical institutions, some of them considered "models," in the territories. Recipients were well-selected for their high standards, their ability to cover recurrent costs and maximize the benefits of specialized equipment and, in some cases, commitment to primary health care.

SCF played a similar conduit role in helping establish a four-year Physiotherapy Training Program at Bethlehem University. SCF began by contributing \$250,000 to the Bethlehem Arab Society for equipment, followed by a four-year, \$60,000 grant to cover student expenses. This expertly designed and operated program is the Occupied Territory's first in a specialty with high demand (and growing political visibility since the intifada). When the first 19 graduates (of an original 22) complete their training in June 1993, half will

return to their sponsoring institutions. The program can easily place the remaining graduates, having documented the need for dozens more, but their salaries are not assured. A second group of 21 students is now in its third year. Exactly 50 percent of each group are women, because the program has explicitly taken into account the needs and cultural preferences of female Moslem patients.

This is an outstanding program that has also produced notable spin-off activities: a) a three-year, once-a-week "upgrading program" for 17 Palestinians now employed as assistant physiotherapists who, while upgrading their own skills, also provide field supervision for students in the physiotherapy program; b) a distance-learning package developed during the Gulf War with obvious potential for many other applications, even in calmer political times; and c) reinforcement for related activities in the Occupied Territories, including assistance (and eventually supervision) for programs that train less specialized community- and home-based rehabilitation workers.

Although SCF chose recipients and channeled funding wisely within its health program, it is no longer in the business. Its new goal, to provide complementary support to local health institutions, is reflected in the short-term training for more than 20 health workers already employed by Near East Council of Churches (NECC), Red Crescent and the Palestinian Medical Relief Committee (MRC) in Gaza, with an eye to possibly creating an association of community health workers.

SCF has also provided modest support for rural clinics at the request of individual communities. A visit to one such facility in Abu Ta'aima showed both the problems and the promise of this program thrust. When approached by community members for a clinic, SCF invested time in convincing them to focus on outreach and home visiting, rather than medicines and fancy equipment. After reaching agreement, SCF linked the community with the MRC in Jerusalem, the leading local NGO that provides primary health care (PHC) services.

MRC agreed to set up a clinic with a grant of \$12,000 from SCF for basic equipment and furniture. The community provided additional funds and labor to renovate the facility, and MRC is covering ongoing operating expenses. Additional SCF criteria included maintaining good records, (an uncommon practice in the Occupied Territories). An indication that the community has taken SCF's primary health care message to heart is its selection of a local woman for nine-month training by MRC as a community health worker. An interview with the MRC physician on duty, however, revealed that only two or three patients a day are attending the clinic, partly because of opposition from the village mukhtar, who reportedly dislikes competition with his own income-producing pseudo-medical "services." Clearly, supporting the creation of primary health care facilities requires a significant investment of SCF involvement, both before and after opening a clinic.

In the future, SCF also plans to integrate PHC with its water and sanitation activities, and is now considering whether and how it might fill other gaps, such as health manpower development and health services for preschools. More generally, SCF correctly sees itself as playing only an ancillary role in the health sector, because this is the area in which local

NGOs have greatest strength. At present, neither the SCF/Gaza nor the SCF/West Bank staff includes a health specialist, and health activities in the territories have been managed by consultants for some time. SCF has scheduled a participatory evaluation of its health activities for early 1993, to establish clearer objectives for the program's next phase.

E. Education: Preschool Improvement

According to SCF's final report on AID III, over 60 preschools throughout the territories were assisted under the grant. Originally, help was given to schools run by village councils and charitable societies, and assistance was exclusively in the form of material aid for equipment, improvement of facilities, and educational materials.

The preschool program was cut back in the late 1980's and then later restored as a key program area, particularly in Gaza, but with important changes. SCF redirected its help to schools run by community groups, grants were limited to \$3,000, and SCF assumed a far more active role in relation to grantee schools. In particular, SCF encouraged teachers and supervisors in these schools to seek training. It coordinated and funded training provided by local institutions and facilitated participation by the full gamut of sponsoring agencies, including numerous charitable societies and womens organizations with diverse constituencies. The SCF/Gaza program coordinator also personally designed and oversaw preschool renovations.

In addition, the preschool program has very successfully supplemented its limited in-house technical expertise by relying on local institutions such as the Early Childhood Resource Centers in Gaza and the West Bank, and by sharing local consultants with other NGOs working in the territories. Making productive and cost-effective use of locally available talent, SCF/Gaza, SCF/West Bank, UNICEF, and Bethlehem University now share an expatriate consultant in early childhood development.

Visits to four Gaza preschools showed that equipment purchased with AID funds was still in good condition despite heavy use. Moreover, these small donations have been intentionally used to leverage such additional contributions as ceiling fans and fluorescent lights from a local hardware store, land from one municipality, materials and operating expenses from a charitable society, and community labor for renovation and repairs. The schools are clearly meeting a strongly-felt need, as classrooms are very crowded (30-40 children per teacher), and waiting lists are long. A workshop on low-cost educational materials, conducted by the program coordinator, was greatly appreciated, its impact visible on walls and classrooms throughout the region!

At a West Bank preschool visited by the team, although the donated equipment was well-cared for and the school far more affluent than its Gaza counterparts, the spirit shown by teachers and classrooms did not seem as lively. Preschool improvement has always been a smaller component of the SCF/West Bank portfolio. Preschools are being formed in the impact areas, however, and women who will teach in them are already receiving training, arranged with SCF's initiative, coordination, and financial support, through the outstanding Early Childhood Resource Center in Jerusalem.

The training strategy for preschool improvement also enhances the likelihood of sustained impact. By involving not only teachers, but supervisors, administrators, and, increasingly, parents as well, the new attitudes and practices introduced through training will have staying power despite the frequent turnover of poorly-paid teachers. For example, teachers and supervisors from 20 schools in Gaza attended a six-month, once-a-week course in early childhood education, given by invited experts from Gaza and the West Bank. Several experts interviewed were enthusiastic about the receptivity of their colleagues to the information they had shared.

The preschool program demonstrates SCF's potential as a genuine catalyst for development. It effectively used small grants and focused staff participation to mobilize community-wide involvement and resources. The program has motivated community groups to form longer-term institutional links with both SCF and local institutions.

In Tuffah, for instance, following the completion of an SCF neighborhood sewer network, a particularly active community group went on to establish a Women's Center, with further assistance from SCF. At the same time, by bringing its numerous preschool grantees and interested local institutions together, SCF is creating an embryonic "early childhood development network" in the Occupied Territories, while strengthening the network through active coordination and technical assistance.

F. Activities for Women

SCF dramatically improved the effectiveness of its programming for women during the grant period, making impressive progress toward the broad program performance indicator (PPI) objective of "assisting women in meeting their potential in society by increasing their skills and confidence."

In the beginning, SCF rejected the idea of separate "women's projects," preferring to incorporate women into projects in all sectors. Under this "gender-neutral" approach, health services and preschools were the principal activities involving and benefiting women, though water projects also made life easier for many.

The first women-specific activity to be added involved helping five village councils and two community groups to establish women's training centers. Six centers began teaching sewing, literacy, and other skills to help raise incomes and living standards. Village council commitment varied widely, and only one center continues to operate. According to a 1988 internal evaluation, however, a women's biscuit cooperative, assisted by SCF, succeeded in creating work and income.

SCF eventually concluded that a prerequisite for real progress on this front was to add more women to its program staff. Impressive female coordinators of women's activities were hired for both Gaza and the West Bank, and one of their first tasks was to review current SCF activities to determine how well they included and benefited women. An early result of this review was the firm commitment that 20 percent of borrowers from the revolving loan fund would be women. An appropriate technology project was also funded in

connection with Bethlehem University, to develop a solar food dryer that could eventually be used by women's food-processing cooperatives. A first model is now being tested and shows promise, though further work is needed to bring down the cost of production.

Additional efforts were made to sensitize and train women and to coordinate the activities of the many Palestinian women's organizations. It soon became clear, however, that village councils did not take women seriously in identifying community needs and priorities, planning projects, or deciding who would benefit most.

Under the new impact areas approach, SCF has used the promise of resources as a way to influence communities to include women in planning and decision-making. Emphasis on "representative groups," accompanied by the risk that failing to be representative will deprive the village committee of future benefits, has led to the formation of separate women's committees (or, less often, the inclusion of women on the single village committee). In both cases, women now play more important roles in SCF-assisted community development activities.

Gender continues to influence the sustainability of activities and benefits. Because women have been relatively powerless in the territories, achieving sustainability of many behavioral and institutional changes seems likely to require more time, effort, and resources than achieving similar goals with men. In business, for example, an evaluation of women's income-generating projects revealed that women were debating issues (e.g., are profits really the goal?) that men generally take for granted in their economic pursuits. Without judging the merits of the issue, increasing women's incomes is likely to be a slower process.

Training women in both job-related skills and broader managerial abilities can accelerate this process, however. In fact, the team found that SCF's most significant contributions to women's economic and decision-making potential were made through its training activities.

Under AID III, professional training funded as a separate project activity was concentrated in the health and education sectors, and women were therefore the primary beneficiaries. The training included the workshops and short-courses in early childhood education and community health, as well as the four-year and up-grading programs in physiotherapy. These courses are helping to create new career paths for women by professionalizing such work in ways that should eventually be reflected in higher salaries and a stronger voice in community decision making.

Much of the training with greatest impact on women was a by-product of activities funded under a line item for "program development." This line item was used especially creatively under the leadership of the Gaza program directors, who are specialists in participatory evaluation and research. In fact, this funding category has allowed flexibility for imaginative programming, generated high-payoff but low-cost activities, enabled significant leverage of AID funds, and showcases SCF's potential to act as an innovator and facilitator, rather than an implementor.

One such activity was a Women's Needs Assessment in Gaza. A team of women, including some from both communities under study, were introduced to the techniques of participatory research through an intensive three-day training session, preceding the two-week field work. With the participation of several women's groups, this exercise served the multiple purposes of training, information gathering and dissemination, and the promotion of cooperation for a common goal. Under SCF direction, the same participatory training, field work, and data collection methods were used by another team of both men and women to produce an economic profile of Beit Hanoun, a small town in the Gaza Strip.

Program development funds were also used for a thorough evaluation of the Gaza preschool program, conducted in September 1991 by in-house staff and outside professionals. This exercise gave another group of women in Gaza useful training in participatory evaluation techniques. Most of the resulting recommendations, e.g., for promoting active parental involvement and linking preschools with nearby medical clinics, were acted upon expeditiously, and will also guide future programming.

The reports produced as a result of the evaluation and research projects are extremely useful in their own right, providing new data as well as models for action-oriented data collection and presentation. By circulating the reports among 20-60 local and international NGOs, SCF makes the information available to the entire development community within the Occupied Territories.

Program development undertakings have generated a number of exciting spin-off activities, in some cases with women trainees now serving as innovators and catalysts. For example, in February 1992, SCF organized a participatory evaluation of donor-assisted income generation projects for Gaza women. Although this evaluation was financed outside the AID grant, it built directly on the program development activities described above.

The main weaknesses of women's income-generating projects identified by the report included the lack of adequate skills among project implementors, lack of attention to financial aspects including marketing, weak project structures and procedures, and the often competing objectives of donors, committees, and workers involved in such projects. These conclusions hold important lessons for everyone in the Occupied Territories and elsewhere who hopes to assist women through income-generating projects.

Ironically, the West Bank branch of a women's organization that is using the SCF-supported solar food dryer to start its own income-generating project was unaware of the evaluation, even though the organization's Gaza branch had a representative on the team. In the future, SCF should try to encourage more communication between the branches of local counterpart organizations.

The spin-off activity with possibly the greatest potential impact is the creation, by SCF-trained women in Gaza, of a Gaza branch of the Women's Affairs Training and Research Center. (The parent organization is in Nablus, and is independently supported by foundations and individuals.) Headed up by a Gazan woman trained as a team-member in all SCF's participatory evaluations, the Gaza center now trains facilitators from a broad range of

women's organizations, sponsors a development clinic with courses on product and project cycles, and trains women to work as researchers and evaluators. A core group of five women has been trained so far and is a valuable resource for the growing number of local and international NGOs working in the Occupied Territories.

Most important in terms of sustainability, the training process begun by SCF as a part of program development has created an institutional context for continuing training, participatory research and evaluation, and information dissemination.

In the uncertain and complicated West Bank/Gaza environment, there are no simple answers about the future of women. The occupation and the intifada have heightened both the need and desire for women to contribute to family income. On the other hand, if the influence of religious fundamentalism increases, the work of SCF and others will become far more difficult. In the meantime, however, SCF's work under the grant has given high priority to the interests of women, taken steps to make them effective participants in decision making and development benefits, and continues to monitor carefully the impact of its activities on women.

G. Contributions of the Post-1989 Approach to Sustainability

Since 1989, SCF has placed more emphasis on developing community capacity to plan and implement development activities. On the West Bank, attention is now directed to "impact areas," where a year or more of needs assessment data collection, organizing, training, and other preparation precedes specific development activities. The smaller and more densely populated Gaza Strip is treated as a single impact area. Here, the new approach has featured increased equipment donations, small construction, and integrated agricultural activities as entry points for intensive institution-building efforts, similar to the West Bank community development work.

Under the new approach, the criteria for selecting impact areas and target institutions include the appraisal of community and institutional performance in earlier SCF-assisted activities. Additional criteria relating to income levels, the involvement of other donors, and beneficiary "readiness" also influence programming decisions. In particular, current selection criteria give increased priority to poverty areas. SCF can make a far more critical difference in poorer and less sophisticated communities, by enabling such villages to address needs through available resources and by helping them become more competitive in seeking outside help.

Comparing a conversation with the village council president of El Taybeh and an interview in the impact area of Kufur Ein illustrates the difference in approaches. The council president spoke knowledgeably about the many donors he had solicited and joked about how often he had been told to "wait for next year's budget." It became clear that SCF was useful in helping the village physical infrastructure, but it had little impact on strengthening the community's capacity for self-help. A conversation in Kufur Ein revealed a different SCF relationship and impact. It was clear that a group process was underway with real possibilities for building self-sustaining capacity for development. It was equally

community ownership, also vastly increase the likelihood that recurring costs will be covered.

The increased emphasis on integrating activities has also improved efficiency and effectiveness in achieving broad project purposes and long-term impact. For example, giving priority to activities that combine water system and sewer construction improved benefit-cost ratios per beneficiary. Introducing health education through water and sanitation projects toward the end of the grant period helped to maximize potential benefits. Water conservation projects were broadened to incorporate environmental, agricultural, and health goals. With more explicit identification and measurement of purpose-level indicators, SCF will be able to supplement effectively the current anecdotal evidence of long-term impact.

Because many, perhaps most, local staff and beneficiaries are far more educated and "modern" than people in developing countries, SCF works primarily as a catalyst in community development and institution building. Training and assistance in skill development and capacity building require relatively little attention. Work in the Occupied Territories, not a "developing country" environment, differs significantly from development assistance in less sophisticated contexts.

Without generalizing beyond evidence available to the team, it was clear that the new SCF emphasis on long-term involvement with impact areas and selected institutions already exhibits promising returns, compared to the earlier equipment donations and construction. Although the immediate output of completed infrastructure and equipment is reduced, the visible strengthening of local skills and community momentum seem more likely to produce continued and long-lasting development.

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SECTION III

PROJECT IMPACTS

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Fencing, too, is "profitable," though quantifying the benefits of keeping animals out of fields and reducing the likelihood of confiscation would require major research.

Even sewer projects, undertaken primarily for non-economic reasons, can be shown to generate benefits in excess of costs. For example, quantifying the value of women's time saved and improvements in children's health would yield impressive returns, though doing so would be a formidable task.

The SCF emphasis on appropriate technology and self-help in sewer construction and other activities increases the likelihood of favorable benefit-cost relationships. Conversely, where activities have clearly yielded negative or low returns, SCF has shifted away from them. This explains, in part, why large-scale infrastructure construction activities have declined.

B. Social Benefits and Costs

The line between "economic" and "social" benefits is not always clear. Improved health, for example, may also "pay off" economically, by reducing medical costs and absences from work. Depending on the value placed on women's time, many other activities yield results in excess of their costs. For purposes of this report, economic benefits are those for which the market system establishes a value, for example, increased farm production, and social benefits, although valuable, have no market value. This artificial distinction can be lessened by attaching economic values to social benefits, a common technique in cost-benefit analysis.

The social benefits of sewer projects exemplify the favorable non-economic consequences of an activity that is also "profitable" economically (though not initiated for business reasons). Environmental sanitation "pays," while it also improves the quality of life. The SCF/Gaza coordinator of women's projects, in a wide-ranging interview, quoted project beneficiaries who described benefits and explained why water projects and the Gaza Neighborhood Sewer Project have been so well received.

Subsequent project visits confirmed the coordinator's comments. Typical benefits included reduced time spent obtaining water, better household cleanliness, fewer flies, more frequent bathing of babies, and other improvements in quality of life.

By leveraging small resource contributions to mobilize community labor and support, SCF initiates a self-sustaining process that, in many cases, enables people to gain control over their lives and improve their living conditions. Overemphasis on measuring quantifiable benefits can too easily divert attention from fundamental changes in beneficiary attitudes and perceptions.

C. Institutionalization and Sustainability

A brief document drafted by SCF for SCF headquarters presents a thoughtful worldwide SCF approach to sustainability and institutionalization. By asking, in effect

"What will happen when we leave?" SCF forces attention to the longer-term implications of current activities. Distinguishing among financial, behavioral, institutional, and policy sustainability, SCF recognizes the importance of accompanying grass roots community development with related efforts at other levels.

Although defining indicators of sustainability in the Occupied Territories context remains a formidable challenge, SCF has made considerable progress in applying the sensible policies and approaches initiated by SCF headquarters.

Field visits provided many examples of sustainability at the behavioral level. For instance, working with well-educated preschool teachers throughout the territories, SCF has institutionalized ways of making teaching aids from inexpensive local materials. Teachers are likely to continue to use the techniques no matter how the political transition proceeds, or whatever happens to local institutions working in preschool education. By training trainers, SCF also assured that new generations of teachers will continue to apply the techniques.

Achievement of sustainability and institutionalization depends primarily on characteristics of the individuals or institutions involved, and on the nature and extent of the contemplated change. A \$50,000 equipment drop at the large Patients' Friends Hospital in Gaza, for example, influenced institutional development far less than \$2,000 worth of playground equipment donated to the Satar preschool in Qarara. As SCF accumulates experience, the costs and benefits of alternative sustainability and institutional goals will become more apparent. The current approach reflects a realistic assessment of feasible goals and appropriate activities for achieving them.

SCF's Crop Diversification Project provides another example, although its current success depends heavily on the existence of a protected market. Farmers who have recently started planting fruit trees are likely to continue, because the intifada has limited imports. While SCF did not, and could not, assure the institutional basis for a permanent thriving fruit industry in Gaza, it provided local institutions with the support necessary for initial cultivation and marketing.

Earlier infrastructure projects with village councils, and current ones with less formal groups, appear to be sustainable. Few of the counterpart sponsors, however, received sufficient attention to institutionalize the motivation and capacity to continue local development ("spin-off projects") independently. The new SCF impact area approach, emphasizing a long-term relationship with community groups, offers greater promise for achieving this more ambitious goal. There is also substantial anecdotal evidence that the Gaza Neighborhood Sewage Project has led to related activities, such as improved garbage collection and efforts to obtain water.

Although SCF exhibits impressive sensitivity to institutionalization and sustainability concerns, staff recognize that there is room for improvement in identifying, programming, and measuring the achievement of related goals. Recognizing the limits of SCF's capacity within the West Bank/Gaza context requires careful identification of feasible institutional goals and activities to achieve them.